

THE TRUE DEMOCRAT.

JOHN G. COLLINS, Proprietor.

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Tallahassee, Friday, April 14, 1905.

The mayor and council of Lawrenceville, Ga., have enacted an ordinance imposing a license tax of \$1,000 on all persons or corporations delivering within the corporate limits any intoxicating liquors. This will doubtless oblige the "blind tigers" and chronic drinkers to receive their supplies at the nearest flag station, but it will not serve to keep liquor out of a "dry" county.

Adjutant-General Foster's committee to apply to the Legislature for a law establishing a permanent camping ground for the State troops consists of himself, Gen. Charles P. Lovell, Col. John W. Sackett, Col. Wm. A. McWilliams and Maj. Eugene S. Matthews. It was provided for at the military convention held at St. Augustine last year, and will doubtless make its presence felt in the Capitol at an early day.

What does the Jacksonville Metropolis mean by the following editorial paragraph which recently appeared in its columns? Surely, it could not mean that the talented Buckman, or the versatile Melton, or the distinguished Stockton, are not Democrats:

"Where are the Duval Democrats, as none asked for or were called to office in the Legislature? Perhaps all are satisfied to have the Governor from this county."

The distinguished editor of the Louisville Courier-Journal, who is now making a tour of Europe, pays the following just and eloquent tribute to the West Coast of Florida:

"The day is coming when the invalid world will flock to Florida, Colorado and California. The West Coast (of Florida) holds itself in reserve. The success which has been achieved on the East Coast will tempt millions to the West Coast, which is still more beautiful. More and more Americans are beginning to discover the virtues of their own country. Of its money-making capabilities there has never been any doubt. Its adaptability to artistic development once established the rest will follow."

The last issue of the Florida Christian Advocate notes the fact that Business Manager Sherwood, of the Live Oak Democrat, had returned a check for a "snug sum" sent to pay, in advance, for a yearly liquor advertisement, and quotes Brother Sherwood as remarking that "we turn down hundreds of dollars' worth of whiskey business every year." Same here. The True Democrat started out that way, and purposes keeping it up until—well, as long as its present proprietor controls its destinies. The Advocate editor also mentions the fact that during a big revival he noted a newspaper man extraordinarily interested in urging sinners from the error of their way, while as manager of a newspaper he allowed its advertising columns to bulge with booze business; also that he knows of a paper which carries a scripture text at its mast head each day, and spreads liquor bargains over its other pages. Consistency is truly a jewel, but it is rare.

After assuming in advance of legislative action to decide the merits of the Wailes-Beard claim adversely, the Braidenton Herald has the good sense to indite a saving clause to the effect that the Legislature should "determine what is lawfully due to the railroads, to Wailes and to the State, and then provide for its settlement. To do this, if it is found necessary, call upon the Governor to ask the supreme court for an advisory opinion upon the laws, and thereby not only take the whole question out of politics and bantering legislation, such as we have had in the past, and the speedy settlement is right in sight." The suggestion seems pertinent that the Governor should be requested to procure from the supreme court an official opinion upon the legal aspect of the case—whether the claim is based on a legal and valid contract, duly executed, and unanimously ratified and acquiesced in, for more than a quarter of a century, by State officials, Legislatures and the entire population of the State; or whether it is merely a matter of public charity.

THE ETHICS OF "ADVISE."

The True Democrat will always gladly speak words of encouragement to the State's legislators, and it certainly will not withhold prompt commendation for every good work which they may perform; but it will neither bestow indiscriminate or undeserved praise, nor assume to instruct them as to their official duties.

They are here as the direct and accredited representatives of their constituents in regard to all local matters, and they also represent the interests of the people of the State at large in all matters affecting the general public welfare. In this two-fold capacity as law-makers, they are, or are presumed to be, fully advised of their obligations; and as it would be rank presumption on the part of any one outside of the territory which they respectively represent to undertake to instruct them as to any local issue, so it would be equally presumptuous to "advise" them as to their duty to the people at large.

It should be the duty and pleasure of every good and thoughtful citizen, as well as of the State press, to aid them in every possible way in the collection of facts or the discussion of doubtful points, to the end that they may be enabled to act with the utmost caution, intelligence, wisdom and sound judgment upon every issue presented for their consideration; but it would be ridiculously absurd to undertake to "advise" them that it is their "duty" to do or not to do any particular thing.

They are here to decide, each for himself and for the interests he represents, according to his information and best judgment, what his duty is; and arbitrary or dictatorial admonition as to such duty, from any source, is not only in the very worst of bad taste, but is impertinent and offensive, and those to whom it is addressed are quite justified in treating such expressions with the silent contempt which they deserve.

A THANKLESS SERVICE.

Editor Hetherington, of the Lakeland News, is one of the brightest-minded and most original writers of the Florida press. In a recent issue he discusses the well-known and apparently incurable absurdity in which some Florida editors have been in the habit of indulging, in devoting time and space to the business of exploiting the political aspirations of Tom, Dick and Harry, utterly regardless of their fitness for the positions which they seek. The writer of this pleads guilty to some of it. He has been helping to boost others into office for the past twenty-five years, and his personal experience is strikingly similar to that described in the following article from the trenchant pen of our brother of The News:

Why should a newspaper tear its shirt into threads and howl itself hoarse to further the private ambitions of some pot-bellied politician, who, after being boosted into a position he has not the brains to fill, looks down with contempt from the heights of his asinine conceit upon those to whom he owes his advancement?

It is amusing—almost pitiable—to observe the kotows and frantic beating of tom-toms indulged in by many of the State papers when referring to the political aspirations of some fellow, who accepts such homage as his divine right, and who would not reward his supporters with a pleasant look, until occasion required their further services.

The fact is that in the majority of cases, these bouquets, thrown by good-natured newspaper men, are wholly undeserved. As a rule the men who are seeking office are of mediocre mentality, whose attainments and abilities are of the most ordinary character. Generally speaking, the man equipped with unusual capacity seeks a more profitable market for his faculties than that offered by politics. It is a pity that it should be so, but those whose talents best fit them to serve the public cannot afford to sacrifice their business interests to accept an office, much less to indulge in a scramble after it.

Plain duty, perfunctorily performed—and there are very few Florida office holders for whom more can be claimed—requires no commendation. But in these days, when politician and grafter have become almost synonymous terms, we shall content ourselves with watching the little game as it progresses, and advising our readers thereof, rather than spend our efforts in attempting to make statesmen out of the sorry material that usually offers.

The Tallahassee True Democrat, which made its first appearance during the month of March, continues to improve with each issue. The name of John G. Collins, a veteran newspaper man, is at the mast-head.—Jacksonville Sun.

PRIMARY LAW AMENDMENTS.

Some of the amendments to the primary election law purporting to have been recommended by the State executive committee appear to be well worthy of consideration by the Legislature, while others are not.

The payment of the expenses of party primary elections by the State, from public funds collected from the whole people for the support of the State government and State institutions, is too grossly irregular to merit serious notice.

The suggestion that all contests of primary elections shall be decided by the courts, instead of the political committees, county and State, is also irregular, but not wholly impracticable. Nevertheless, the idea of appealing to the courts, except in extreme cases, where the jurisdiction is natural and not arbitrary, is repugnant to our system of jurisprudence, as well as to our political system.

To exempt, by statute, the receiver of a bribe, in order that the giver thereof, is a curious and somewhat startling misconception of the existing rules of evidence; but if that is the only way to reach cases of bribery in primary elections, and if such a law would stand the tests applied by the courts, an experiment in that direction might produce some interesting results.

The proposition to require all candidates to file sworn statements exhibiting their actual expenditures in primary contests is a most excellent one, and has been tried with good effect in other States.

So, also, is the one prohibiting any persons from soliciting from candidates contributions for charitable or other alleged purposes, the inference being that a refusal may be used to the candidate's damage. The prohibition should be extended, however, to include the prohibition of soliciting loans of money from candidates, the inference being that the borrower will effectively assist in the election of the lender.

With respect to the prohibition by law of "alleged wholesale contributions by corporations of money, free passes," etc., "for the purpose of influencing voters," the fact appears to be that individuals do a great deal more of that sort of thing than corporations. If personal and individual friends of candidates can be prohibited from assisting in the payment of "campaign expenses," surely corporations could and should be thus prohibited. So, it seems, the prohibition should be made to include any friend of a candidate who desired to contribute—if that can be done.

Tax collectors should certainly be forbidden by law to receive poll taxes from any person other than the tax-payer, duly identified as a registered and otherwise qualified elector. Much of the irregularity complained of in elections could be eliminated by such a wise and wholesome provision.

The proposition that the State committee be authorized to appoint one inspector in every election precinct in the State is too wildly absurd to be worthy of a moment's consideration. So, also, is that requiring the commissioners of each county to redistrict, so that not more than 200 voters may be in each district. That there should be needed changes in the registration law, and a new and complete registration in each county, is too patent a proposition to be successfully denied, and is a reform more urgently needed than any other that has been proposed.

Finally, the change recommended in the form of the ballot, so that all candidates for State and Federal offices shall be in one column and those for all county offices in another, making the ballot twice as wide and half as long as that now used, needs no argument to demonstrate its reasonableness.

The Jacksonville Metropolis complains of the quality of the work that is being turned out by the State printer, and urges that more money be appropriated for this purpose. A mistake, esteemed contemporary; sufficient funds are already applied to this purpose, but the trouble seems to be that no State official has the nerve to turn down the rotten work which is being done in the name of "State printing." The State printer appears to have influence which will cause the acceptance of his work, no matter how poorly executed, and complaint seems impotent to check this mis-direction of public money.—Bartow Courier Informant.

Some State officials have "turned down" the work of the State printer, but this does not appear to have operated as a cure for the evil of "rotten work." The "true inwardness" of the State printing business can be readily ascertained, with complete evidence, whenever the Legislature, through its committees, desires it.

Hon. A. J. Henry, of Lake City, is registered at the Bloxham this week.

ABOUT IMMIGRATION.

The Jacksonville Times-Union complimented The True Democrat by the re-production, in its issue of the 5th inst., of an editorial entitled "Some Comparisons," and says in its editorial columns the following wise words, under the caption "An Immigration Idea:"

The proposition to take some steps to advertise Florida and induce immigration is, we understand, already being favorably discussed at Tallahassee; and we trust that the matter may be soon taken up by the Legislature now in session, and that the Duval county delegation will by no means be the last to advance the interest of the State in this direction.

It has been suggested that, instead of organizing a regular immigration bureau at present, a moderate appropriation be made for the department of agriculture to use in bringing the advantages and attractions of the State to the attention of those seeking homes in the South.

Should this plan prove successful—should the investment prove profitable—a larger appropriation would naturally be in order at the next session, or steps for the establishment of a bureau of immigration might at any time be taken.

But these points are, after all, simply matters of detail. The only point with which the people of Florida need concern themselves at present is that involved in the main question.

If we want immigration, we must work for it. Those who do the work must be paid for it, and whatever else may be in doubt, we may rest assured that while Florida continues her present policy of "masterly inactivity" she will continue to find herself left far in the rear by such States as California, which every year expends a large sum in advertising the State and its resources where it will do the most good.

In our issue of March 31 appeared an editorial entitled "Unjust Apportionment," afterwards copied in the Times-Union, which attracted the attention of Hon. W. K. Zewadsky, of Ocala, who was a member of the Legislature of 1897, and who has furnished to us the only explanation of the failure of that body to make the constitutional apportionment referred to which we have ever heard of. Mr. Zewadsky states that he prepared and introduced a bill providing for the apportionment, based upon the State census of 1895, but that a combination effected by the representatives of the counties which would have lost a member in the reapportionment with some of those whose representation would not have been affected thereby effectually accomplished the defeat of the bill. Thus it appears that the Representatives of six or seven counties, simply to prevent a reduction of the number of Representatives therein, must have violated their oaths, and induced other members whose counties would not have been affected, to violate their oaths to support the Constitution of the State, which expressly commanded them to make the reapportionment.

It is said the Senate committee on public printing is investigating the advisability as well as the practicability of the ownership by the State of its own printing plant. Florida now spends \$15,000 annually for printing, and the work is not all in the hands of the State printer by any manner of means. The chairman of the Senate committee, Hon. H. H. McCreary, is editor of the Daily Sun, of Gainesville, and is himself a practical printer. The laws of various States governing public printing will be carefully studied.—Tallahassee Correspondence in Times-Union.

Should the Legislature conclude that "public ownership" is the best solution of the State printing problem, one thing appears to be certain, and that is that the owners of old, moth-eaten, worn-out, broken-down, out-of-date material will not be permitted to "unload" upon the State.

Some More Bouquets.

The True Democrat is a new venture in the journalistic field at Tallahassee and is a bright, wide-awake paper.—Lakeland Sun.

The last issue of The True Democrat, published at Tallahassee, is on our table. It is beautifully printed and ably edited. If Mr. Collins keeps his paper up to its present high standard of excellence, it will deserve success and receive within its territory the support of those who know and appreciate a good thing when they see it.—Brooksville Southern Argus.

We have just received a copy of The True Democrat, Vol. 1, No. 3, by John G. Collins, Tallahassee. Its motto is "Good Government; Honesty in Public Office; Equal Justice to all—Special Privileges to None." We heartily commend it to the reading public.—Chipley Banner.

Harry Fannin's "Third House" convention, called for the 21st. inst., is the talk of the town.

RHODES SCHOLARSHIP

Awarded to F. W. Buchholz, of the Florida State College.

The first Florida beneficiary of the Rhodes scholarship fund will soon begin his voyage over the briny ocean to England for a three years' course at Oxford University. It will be extremely gratifying to all patrons and friends of the Florida State College to know that this institution has the honor of furnishing the first representative to this renowned institution under Cecil Rhodes' bequest.

Several of the more important educational institutions of Florida and the South were represented among the bevy of five young men who contested for this prize, the examination being supervised by Dr. J. N. Anderson. The examination papers were sealed, forwarded to Washington, and thence to Oxford, where they were graded. The Florida committee of selection (composed of Prof. A. A. Murphree, president Florida State College, chairman; Dr. Andrew Sledd, president University of Florida, and Dr. W. F. Blackman, president of Rollins College) were then notified that Messrs. Buchholz and P. H. Whaley of Pensacola (a graduate of Kenyon College, Ohio) had stood successful examinations. The committee made their selection upon the following bases: Scholarship, 80 per cent; fondness for athletics and athletic record, 20 per cent; honesty, morality, and general good character, 30 per cent; popularity and leadership among fellow-students, 20 per cent.

It was determined by the committee that young men born, reared and educated in Florida should have precedence over other candidates for the scholarship, where all other things are equal. As the general average of the two candidates were about equal, it was not difficult for the committee to make its selection.

Mr. Buchholz has received his entire collegiate education in Tallahassee, where he is well thought of. He is fond of athletics and was a member of the football team which captured the silver championship cup offered by the Times-Union.

Examinations were held simultaneously in all the States, and, as they were identical, a comparison is afforded with the educational institutions of other States, which shows up very favorably for the Florida State College. Tennessee presented 3 candidates, only 1 passing; in Kentucky, 1 passed out of 6; in Mississippi there were 18 contestants and 18 failures.

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G. F. Sprague.	Mrs. McIntosh's
J. D. Stephens.	Mrs. Bond's
Wm. L. Taylor.	Miss Damon's
J. S. Taylor.	Bloxham Hotel
O. M. Tillman.	Mr. Spear's
J. P. Wall.	Mrs. Spear's
E. L. Wartman.	Bloxham Hotel
J. W. Watson.	Leon Hotel
G. B. Wells.	Leon Hotel
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